

This is the story of the owl and the mouse.

Not just any owl of course but a great horned owl .

A majestic beauty unlike any that had come before it.

With talons shinny as pure as black onyx kept razor sharp and if one dared you would see your reflection shine upon their surface.

The great owls feathers were magnificent with a golden glaze that could be seen for miles.

Its great horns bold and dark, protruded to the sky's majesty. Most of all if you were lucky enough to see this great bird the first thing you would notice would be the voice. It was as if angels sang to your soul.

But there is more to this story than the owl as the first sentence alludes.

There is a mouse.

Now most owls and mice are just dinner friends. That is the owl enjoys mice for dinner.

But this mouse had a special way about him that no one missed.

Even a hungry owl would soon notice.

It all begins in a village on the coast. A proud village with a lush land that provided it's peoples with a great harvest every fall for as long as anybody could remember.

The harooks as they were known worshiped their god with passion. Tilling the soil and singing praise "Oh blessed Makuli we thank you for this day"

This hymnal which cannot be translated in full was once a day by all.

The hymnal was always done at the same time everyday. This they did this so accurately you could set your watch. How this could happen in a time without watches or even a sundial is a mystery that may never be answered.

The clever mouse soon noticed this routine, that all the people would stop what they are doing and kneel in prayer. This is the perfect time thought the clever rodent.

I shall raid their storage bins while the villagers are distracted. I will never get caught this way.

And so it was for many years the mouse would only feast during the prayer ritual.

"I am a clever mouse and shall reproduce teaching my young the time to eat" said the mouse to himself. because he was alone. This is a problem, the mouse continued, I have discovered a way to thrive but have no one to share my secret with.

I must find others. But if I venture out at any other time I will surely be caught by the villagers.

This was no ordinary mouse as I have said it will soon be apparent to you why.

The mouse decided it would find a mate. A simple idea really, it has gone on for generations in all species. Even the villagers found mates.

Perhaps even the owl had a mate.

The mouse awoke to a new day and promised himself that he would seek a mate this day. But where?

He began by scouting the village slowly and carefully. He moved across one end of the village to the other. Near the far end of the village a river meanders its way to the shore.

The little mouse reached the river. Nothing.

At least he thought there was nothing. But his slight movements didn't go unnoticed.

The river was a beautiful sight, bountiful and full of fish. Filled with salmon arriving on time much as the way the villagers worshipped on time. In an oak tree along the shore of the river sat one creature. The owl. This was his domain and no one dared venture in his sight.

The mouse clever as he was didn't see the owl.

At first the owl paid little notice after all he had plenty of fish. He just didn't like to have any small creatures invading his tree.

The owl cried out, a screech that would shake a man.

The tiny mouse looked up and knew what the owl said.

And so the clever mouse responded with a shout "Mr. owl please, if you don't mind I am hunting for a wife I do not want to sit in your tree".

A wife? Silly mouse! screeched the owl Why would you come to my tree looking for a wife. Don't you know that the mice all live in the grass over yonder? And with a graceful sweep of its head the owl glanced to the right. Why I can see many mice right now.

The poor mouse was overwhelmed "many mice" Oh my, I must get up in that tree and see for myself. But the owl loves his perch. How can I convince the owl to bring me up there ? The mouse was motionless for a moment.

The owl grew impatient and spoke again" mouse you must move along now I grow weary of your incessant chatter"

The clever little mouse had a plan, he would convince the owl to lift him to the tree.

Mr. owl I know a secret about the villagers that you may eat from their stockpile and they will never catch you, shouted the mouse to the great owl.

At first the owl said nothing, but he remembered that one day when he was flying by the village he spotted a basket of fruit. With a graceful sweeping motion the owl had landed and tasted the fruit. It was delicious, but many villagers approached and they began to chase him off. He did want to taste the fruit again.

So the owl looked down to the mouse and said "A secret you say ? tell me more"

The clever mouse knew he had the owl just where he wanted him.

I have been eating from their stockpile for years. No one has caught me shouted the mouse. Please lift me to your perch so I can share the secret.

The owl reluctantly agreed "I warn you little mouse I will eat you if your secret is not true". And with that the mighty owl swooped towards the little mouse.

And with a scream the little mouse was airborne.

What a magnificent view thought the mouse. I can see for miles from up here.

Why there is the village! it looks so small and, there over there I can see the grass and the mice. Yes the owl spoke the truth so many mice!

Just as suddenly it was all over and the owl and the mouse were still.

Perched atop the giant oak.

Now this mouse was exactly where he needed to be.

Across the great plain of grass and flowers many mice could be seen.

The wind danced among the flowers revealing a particularly nice looking mouse to him.

The mouse began to realize he could never travel that far to find a mate. Besides he sure liked that ride, what a rush. He needed to fly again.

Now the story seems to be moving along we've seen the mouse begin to get what he wants, but that owl is nothing to mess with . The little mouse had better be careful.

What a site this must have been.

A tiny grey mouse with a dark stripe across its back. Soft fluffy fur and pink eyes sitting in a great oak tree. Its long tail whipping to and fro.

Right next to a great horned owl.

This would have shocked the owl's kin. The poor owl thought about this and spoke with a whisper.

"Now mouse, please relate to me the details I cannot be seen like this, perched here next to you."

Owl, owl, owl, the mouse began, you are such a mighty creature why are you worried what others think?

Please, mouse the owl quipped, just tell me about the villagers.

Ok owl the mouse responded, everyday the villagers pray. When they do this they cannot be disturbed, why you could fly right down in front of them and untie their shoes. But most importantly you may eat your fill of the gathered fruits.

I have done this and it is true.

Please now Mr. Owl fly me to the grassland so that I may find a friend.

The mouse said with as much authority as he could.

"I am not sure I believe this story little mouse.

You must prove to me it is true.

Then I will fly you over yonder". The owl demanded.

The mouse agreed. And because he was clever he devised a clever plan.

In the village is a barn said the mouse, fly me to the back and land atop the peak.

From there you will witness my sneak.

I will untie a shoe,

I will steal some fruit

The two deeds you may view

The fruit I will give to you

The grassland you will bring me to

Startled by the prose the owl finally spoke "Why little mouse you are a clever one. If you do as you say I will bring you to that land of grass and flowers".

The mouse quickly chirped "Then let us be on our way!"

And with that the two were off. They flew to the barn and the mouse did what he said he would.

He untied a shoe, he stole some fruit. All the while the owl as witness.

When the mouse returned to the barn, the owl flew down.

Speaking slowly and calmly the owl said

"it is true what you said. Clever little mouse, you stole some fruit and untied a shoe. But now I must eat you"

And just so suddenly the mouse was dead. Now the owl had everything.

As he flew back to his perch he spotted a squirrel and gave it a scare.

"Life is good beamed the owl."

Hotsabi -2005